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National Grid Solihull team's charity climb set to 'pylon' £24,000 for Macmillan

Solihull team scale 150-foot pylon for charity

10 Jun 2015

- Daredevil climb generates £24,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support
- National Grid staff in two-year partnership to raise half a million pounds for Macmillan

Plucky National Grid employees, who embarked on a white-knuckle climb to the top of a 150-foot electricity pylon, have generated a whopping £24,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Staff from the company's Homer Road offices in Solihull swapped their day jobs to scale a National Grid training pylon taller than Nelson's column.

And it was a case of 'fortune favours the brave' as donations poured in for the adrenaline-fuelled fundraiser, held at the company's Eakring training academy in Nottinghamshire, on Thursday (4 June).

Thanks to generous colleagues, friends and family, the fearless band doubled their original charity target to more than £12,000. National Grid has pledged to match their efforts, with £24,000 set to be handed over to Macmillan to pay for heating grants for people with cancer.

Climbing electricity pylons is a routine part of the job for National Grid's force of overhead line engineers but Stephanie Hazell, Corporate Strategy and Business Development Director, and her team are more used to having their feet firmly on the ground.

She said: "It was an amazing experience – exhausting, exhilarating and just a little terrifying! Even more amazing, though, was the generous response from colleagues, family and friends – the fundraising target has far exceeded our expectations.

"All this money will support Macmillan's excellent work in caring for people with cancer.

"Everyone has been touched by cancer in some way. I was diagnosed with a tumour in my leg while at university. My prognosis was excellent and I am left with just a large scar but many others face far more serious challenges."

Among the intrepid climbers were Solihull residents Alan Foster and Nick Reeves.

"It was much more challenging than I expected – but I am so proud to have got to the top and I'm just delighted about the response from colleagues, friends and family who have been so generous in their donations to Macmillan," said Alan.

"I hadn't quite appreciated how high the pylon was until we arrived at the site and saw it towering above everything else - coincidentally that's when the nerves started!"

Nick added: "I'm glad I did it. The view at the top was fantastic and I'm chuffed that we were able to raise so much for a great cause."

Macmillan was voted by National Grid employees as the company's chosen charity. In a two-year fundraising partnership, staff are aiming to raise half a million pounds to fund heating grants for people with cancer.

Full safety precautions were taken for the climb. The eight-strong team donned protective equipment before being harnessed to the training pylon, which is connected to non-live wires, and is used to train linesmen. They were accompanied by qualified National Grid engineers throughout the event.

Members of the public should never attempt to climb pylons. It is extremely dangerous as they risk death or serious injury from high voltage electricity or falls.

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Notes to Editors:

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National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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